

PERSONAL FISHING POLE HOLDER**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

Fishing with a pole and reel often requires the use of both hands to accomplish various activities. Activities such as baiting a hook, attaching a lure, adjusting sinkers, adjusting bobbers or removing fish require more than one hand. The pole is often rested on the ground, held awkwardly under the arm or even between the legs. If the pole falls, it could potentially cause injuries from the sharp hook, or damage the pole or reel. This is especially inconvenient when fishing in water or in muddy or rough terrain. In addition, it may be desirable to free the hands to eat, assist a child fishing or to carry other gear when traveling.

Fishing pole holders are available to assist the fisherman, however their usefulness is limited. Holders are available which attach the pole to the fisherman by holding the pole by its handle. This type of holder is limited to specific styles and sizes of fishing poles. Fly fishing rods cannot be used with these holders because the butt end of the pole is very close to the reel. Holders of this type are available which require adapters for use with various style poles. All of these holders can only hold the pole in one position, by the handle. This position can be used for hands-free fishing where the pole is extended away from the user but is not optimal for baiting the hook or attaching a lure where it is desirable to have the tip of the pole close to the fisherman's body. This type of handle holder is not useful for traveling when carrying other gear. US patents 4,569,466 and 5,573,167 show examples.

US patent 3,874,573 describes a belt-mounted holder that holds the pole by its handle. This holder has the same limitations as the previous examples. However, the pole is oriented nearly vertically. This position is improved for baiting the hook but is awkward for hands-free fishing and walking, especially with long poles.

US patent 2,846,129 describes another belt-mounted holder that holds the pole by its handle. This holder orients the fishing pole in either vertical or horizontal positions. This holder is limited to specific styles of fishing poles and is relatively complex and expensive to manufacture. Because the holder relies on spring force to retain the pole, a compromise is needed to achieve sufficient force to retain heavier poles yet have low enough force to allow easy loading and unloading.

US patent 4,546,566 describes a belt-mounted holder for use with a fly fishing rod where the butt end of the pole is close to the reel. This holder is designed for use with other types of poles but will not function with all styles of pole handles. This design requires the user to rotate the pole about the rod axis for installation and can hold the pole in only one position.

All of the holders that utilize the handle for attachment become difficult to use with longer and heavier fishing poles especially surf casting poles. All of the pole's weight is extended in front of the user placing excess stress on the torso while twisting the holder about the user's belt. Designs that use spring force may disengage and cause the pole to be dropped.

US patent 4,739,914 can hold the pole in multiple positions along the rod. However, it utilizes spring force to retain the pole. This limits the diameter and weight of the pole that can be used and requires a compromise of spring force to hold the pole while allowing easy loading. The design is also complex and expensive to manufacture.

Holders are available which attach the pole to the fisherman's side with a pouch that holds the handle and reel. This type of holder is bulky and has the same limitations as many of the previous examples.

US patent 6,138,976 describes a holder that attaches the handle of the pole to the lower leg or ankle. This type of device holds the pole nearly vertical with the tip of the pole close to the body. This position can be used for baiting the hook or attaching a lure but is not optimal for hands-free fishing, traveling or when the legs are submerged in water.

Other holders are available which strap the pole to the fisherman's back or side for travelling but are not useful for hands-free fishing, baiting the hook etc. There are fishing pole holders that are fixtured to the ground. These are intended for hands-free fishing without the pole being secured to the fisherman.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Generally speaking, the present invention is directed to an apparatus for supporting a fishing pole comprising a support plate, a first arm extending from the support plate,

wherein the first arm comprises a slot, and a second arm extending from the support plate and spaced apart from the first arm, wherein the second arm comprises a slot, wherein the first arm is oriented in a first position, and the second arm is oriented in a position that is inverted with respect to the first position, whereby a fishing rod that is positionable in the first and second slots is restrained from movement out of the slots when an end thereof is sufficiently weighted.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a fuller understanding of the invention, reference is had to the following description taken in connection with the accompanying figures, in which:

Figs. 1-12 illustrate constructions and methodologies in accordance with the present invention, as more particularly indicated below.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The improved device shown in figure 1 illustrates a new fishing pole holder that secures the pole to the fisherman's torso. The fishing pole holder (1) (further referred to as "holder") attaches to the fisherman by use of a common belt through slots (2). The fishing pole attaches to the holder (1) by two "Y" shaped arms (4,5). The forward "Y" shaped arm (4) is oriented with the opening downward while the rear "Y" shaped arm (5) is oriented upward.

Figure 2 shows a bottom view of the holder. Figure 3 shows a front view of the holder. Figure 4 shows a side view of the holder.

Figure 5 shows the holder (1) secured to the fisherman with a belt (6) and the fishing pole (3) installed. The belt (6) can be attached at the fisherman's waist through belt loops in the trousers or the belt (6) can be attached anywhere along the torso. The fishing pole (3) attaches to the holder (1) by the rod (7) nested in the "Y" shaped arms (4,5) instead of the handle (8). This allows the fishing pole (3) to be easily secured to the fisherman in any position along the rod (7) for multiple functions.

Figure 5 shows the fishing pole (3) positioned for hands-free fishing with the rod (7) extended away from the body. Figure 6 shows the fishing pole (3) positioned for baiting the hook or attaching a lure where the tip (9) of the fishing pole is close to the fisherman's body. Figure 7 shows the fishing pole (3) positioned for traveling.

Figure 8 shows the method by which the fishing pole (3) is firmly nested by the holder (1). The fishing pole's (3) center of balance (10) is positioned rearward of the rear "Y" shaped arm (5). The forward "Y" shaped arm (4) is oriented with the opening downward and the rear "Y" shaped arm (5) is oriented upward. This allows the fishing pole's (3) weight to firmly nest itself to the holder (1). The fishing pole (3) firmly nests itself to the holder (1) over most of the length of the rod (7) because the fishing pole's (3) center of balance (10) is located on or very close to the handle (8). Although not essential, the "Y" shaped arms (4,5) can be coated with a rubber or elastomer material (11) to eliminate slipping of the rod (7).

The nesting of the rod (7) via the "Y" shaped arms (4,5) allows the use of any size fishing pole (3) with the holder (1) regardless of reel type, including fly fishing poles. Because the handle (8) is not utilized, no special adapters are needed for various styles of fishing poles (3). Even large surf casting poles can be balanced on the holder (1) to reduce stress on the torso and twisting of the holder (1) about the user's belt (6).

Figure 9 shows use of a left-handed holder (12) along with the right-handed holder (1) attached to the fisherman by a single belt (6). This arrangement allows the fisherman to use two fishing poles (3) with all of the functions described previously.

The holder (1) is relatively small, simple and lightweight. It can be easily stored in a tackle box. The holder (1) works equally well with small children or large adults. The fishing pole (3) is easily attached or removed with one hand. The holder (1) can be used in either standing or sitting position.

Although not essential to the invention, a band (13) shown in figure 10 is employed when the holder (1) is used for carrying the fishing pole (3) on rough terrain. The band (13) is attached to the holder (1) with a peg (14). The band (13) consists of an elastic material that wraps around the rod (7) at the front "Y" shaped arm (4) and hooks to the rear

"Y" shaped arm (5). The band (13) prevents the fishing pole (3) from bouncing out of the front "Y" shaped (4) arm when travelling on rough terrain.

It should be noted that the "Y" shaped arms (4,5) could vary in shape while allowing the holder (1) to function in the same manner. Figure 11 shows examples of some alternate shapes possible.

The embodiment shown in figures 1-8 is molded inexpensively as a single piece from a plastic material. The holder described in these figures can be constructed from other materials and methods to function in the same manner. Figure 12 shows an example of an alternate embodiment. The "Y" shaped arms (4,5) and belt loops (15) are constructed of metal wire. The metal wire is attached to metal plates (16) by welding or other means. The metal plates are attached to a strap (17) by rivets (18). The strap (17) can be made from plastic, leather or other flexible materials.

It will thus be seen that the objects set forth above, among those made apparent from the preceding description, are efficiently attained and, since certain changes may be made in the above constructions and methodologies without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention, it is intended that all matter contained in the above description or shown in the accompanying drawings shall be interpreted as illustrative and not in a limiting sense.

While the invention has been particularly shown and described with respect to preferred embodiments thereof, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that changes in form and details may be made therein without departing from the scope and spirit of the invention.

For example, while the present invention has been particularly disclosed with respect to a fishing pole, other elongated members, such as poles, sticks, pipes or the like can be advantageously carried by the present invention, following the instructions for achieving the benefits thereof as set forth above.